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SOURCE Le Journal d'Extreme Orient.UPRISING OF CATHOLICS IN VIET MINH ZONE

According to the strongly anti-Communist Saigon daily, Le Journal d'Extreme Orient, escapees arriving at Haiphong have reported that Catholics in Vinh Province revolted in April of this year against the Viet Minh, and that a secret Catholic resistance organization has been founded among the Catholic villagers to fight Communism and Viet Minh abuses. The article gives an account of the village fighting, which resulted in the Viet Minh putting down the uprising.

Some of the Catholics in Vinh Province, which has 180,000 Catholic residents out of a total population of 800,000, have openly revolted against the Viet Minh. The fighting took place the last week of April 1952 in villages mid-way between Haiphong and Hue. An uprising of lesser scope also occurred in the Than Hoa Province, which has 60,000 Catholic residents.

Up to the end of 1951, the Catholics under the Viet Minh appear to have had "normal relations" with the Viet Minh, being allowed to have their own newspaper and print shop, as well as being permitted to participate in the "movement for Catholic action."

For unknown reasons, the situation deteriorated around last December, and as a result a new organization was founded secretly by Catholic village communities in Vinh Province. This organization was named the Catholic Alliance, and its objective reportedly is open revolt against atheistic Communism, as well as fighting the abuses to which Catholics under the Viet Minh are subjected.

When the Viet Minh found out about this organization, they decided to take action against it. The first known incident reportedly took place in Nghi Loc village, where a woman was killed by the Viet Minh when the people objected to the arrest of the priest. In other villages the Viet Minh did not dare interfere with the population, which refused to cooperate in conscription and payment of taxes to the Viet Minh.

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Around 20 April 1952, the Viet Minh dispatched a force of 200 men to Trung Nghia, one of the centers of the resistance. The officer in charge ordered the population to stay indoors, advising them that he was going to arrest only the cadres of the Catholic Association.

The irate population fought off the Viet Minh with pitch forks and shovels. The surprised enemy reportedly gave up and was disarmed. The Catholic authorities advised the population to release the prisoners and return the arms. There were no casualties.

On 24 April, the Viet Minh retaliated. Two thousand men, equipped with automatic weapons, surrounded Trung Nghia and Thanh Phong. Escapees from these two Catholic villages gave an account of the uprising to Hanoi authorities.

The attack on Trung Nghia was resisted by the population, and the village did not surrender until 25 of the people, women and children among them, were killed. The Viet Minh took over 100 prisoners. Peasants of the neighboring villages tried in vain to help their besieged friends.

Similarly, when the troops were set to attack Thanh Phong, the men of the village took up their stations, while the women prayed. The Viet Minh opened fire; they killed three villagers and took eight prisoners. The village was subsequently taken by the Viet Minh.

According to the youths who fled to Haiphong, the whole population of Vinh Province is oppressed by the Viet Minh, although open Communist propaganda approves of the Catholic faith. The same youths also declared that the population of these Viet Minh-dominated areas is hoping for speedy liberation.

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